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Medical Officer's Annual Report

1946

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ANNUAL REPORT
OF
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for Year 1946

To the Chairman and Members of the Burnham-on-Sea Urban District Council—

Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my third Annual Report, the thirty-second in the series of Medical Officers Reports of the Area. The Report shows a satisfactory state of Public Health but much still requires to be done.

I wish to acknowledge the help I have received from both Mr. Graham, Sanitary Inspector, and Mr. Dixon Grubb, Surveyor, and also from the clerical staff.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
Geoffrey B. Egerton,
Medical Officer of Health.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area = 2,246 acres.

POPULATION :—

1931 Census	7,705
Registrar General's Estimate for 1946 ..	8,516

Rateable Value : £65,522.

Sum represented by penny rate : £263. 6s. 4d.

INDUSTRIES. The chief industries in the area are : Brick and Tile Yards, Timber Yards, Bacon Factory, Tray Factory, and Pram Canopy, Factory, Laundry, Creamery, and Services Returned Stores Depot.

VITAL STATISTICS :

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	74	59	133
Illegitimate	7	3	10
			143

Still Births : Nil.

Birth Rate : 16.7 per 1,000.

Deaths	Male	Female	Total
	45	68	113

Death Rate : 13.2 per 1,000

Infant Mortality (Deaths of Infants under one year of age).

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	6	3	9
Illegitimate ..	—	1	1
			10

Registered Births. After allowing for inward and outward transfers, the Registrar General credited the Urban District with 143 Live Births for 1946; 81 were males and 62 were females. Of these, 10 were illegitimate (7 males and 3 females).

There were no Still Births registered.

The Birth Rate for 1946 was 16.7 per 1,000, which is lower than that for the previous year (19.2), and below that for the Country as a whole (19.1).

Deaths. 113 Deaths were registered as having occurred in the Urban District during the year; of these 45 were Males and 68 were females. The number of deaths in the four quarters of the year were: First quarter 43, second quarter 16, third quarter 19 and fourth quarter 35.

There were 10 deaths of infants under one year of age, of these 1 was illegitimate.

The Death Rate for 1946 was 13.2 per 1,000, which is lower than that for the previous year (15.1).

The following Table shows the Causes of Death:

All Causes	Male 45	Female 68
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	—
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
Cancer of Buccal Cavity, Aesophagus and Uterus (F)	2	—
Cancer of Stomach and Intestines	2	5
Cancer of Breast	—	2
Cancer of all other sites	6	6
Diabetes	—	—
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	4	10
Heart Disease	8	21
Other diseases of the Circulatory System ...	—	4
Ulcer of the Stomach or Duodenum	—	—
Appendicitis	—	1
Other digestive diseases	—	2
Bronchitis	1	—
Pneumonia	2	1
Other diseases of the Respiratory System ...	2	—
Nephritis	—	2
Premature Birth	3	1
Influenza	1	—
Congenital Malformation, birth injuries ...	—	2
Road Traffic Accidents	—	—
Other Violent causes	2	2
All other causes	11	9

Infectious Disease. The following Table sets out particulars of Infectious Disease occuring in the area during the year:

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths
Tuberculosis – Respiratory	13	—	1
Non-Respiratory	1	—	—
Dysentery	4	4	—
Scarlet Fever	1	1	—
Measles	4	—	—
Whooping Cough	18	—	—
Acute Primary Pneumonia	3	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	1	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—
Cebro-Spinal Meningitis	2	2	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1	—

We were noticeably free from any serious incidence of Infectious Disease during the year.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The number of children immunised in the area of this Authority was : School children 741, Pre-School children 288, making a total of 1,029.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

I. Public Health Officers of the Authority :
Medical Officer of Health – Dr. G. B. Egerton, M.C., M.B., B.S.
Surveyor – E. Dixon Grubb, A.M.I.C.E.
Sanitary Inspector – W. B. Graham, M.R.S.I., M,S.I.A.

II. (*a*) Laboratory facilities – The Public Health Laboratory Service, Taunton.

(*b*) Ambulance facilities – The St. John Ambulance, staffed by voluntary workers of the St. John Ambulance Brigade at Highbridge.
For cases of Infectious Disease – The Axbridge Isolation Hospital Ambulance.

A Hospital Car Service is available for sitting cases with headquarters at Weston-super-Mare and Bridgwater.

(*c*) Nursing – District Nurses in both Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge continue to do grand work ; their duties are hard and arduous, and, too often, taken for granted.

(*d*) Clinics – The Infant and Child Welfare Centres in both Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge are going strong and are greatly appreciated. In Burnham these Clinics are held in the Church Hall on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in every month. In Highbridge at the Adult School, Church Street on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in every month.

HOUSING.

There were 450 applicants for Council Houses at the end of 1946. Thirty houses were erected and ninety were in course of erection by the Council.

Sixteen were erected and thirty-five were in course of erection by private enterprise.

The programme of new houses to be erected by the Council is 2 for 1947. It should be mentioned here that the number of new houses to be built in this area for 1947, including both Council and Private Enterprise, is limited by the Ministry of Health to six.

Existing Houses. There were 26 known cases of overcrowding, 10 of which have been settled. and a number have been allotted Council Houses, which are in course of erection. Doubtless the remaining cases will receive proper consideration by the Housing Committee when vacancies occur. New houses, both private enterprise and state-aided schemes are in progress, and several large houses have been converted into flats. The Government Departments concerned control the number of houses to be erected during the forthcoming year, and licensing of building work is on a restricted basis.

SANITARY WORK.

1. Water Supply. The water supply was satisfactory in quality and quantity; no extensions or improvements were undertaken during the year.

All reports from the Public Analyst showed no evidence of contamination and the results were satisfactory.

All houses within the Urban District boundaries have a main piped water supply.

Sporadic shortages were experienced due to the failure of the pumps consequent upon shedding of the load by the electricity suppliers.

The existing reservoir holds less than 3 hours supply. The Council's Consulting Engineers have been requested to seek sanction from the Ministry of Health for the immediate construction of a supplementary reservoir to bring the total storage up to 3 days supply. This scheme was approved in principle by the Ministry of Health in 1939, but actual construction was postponed until after the war.

This is now considered to be extremely urgent.

2. Milk Supply. 17 samples were submitted for Tubercle examination: of these 16 were negative and 1 positive In this latter case, appropri- measures were taken at once, and the infected cattle were traced and slaughtered.

(*a*)	Total number of registered Dairy Farms ...	21
(*b*)	Number of Retailers	17
(*c*)	Number of Producer Retailers included in (*b*) ...	7
(*d*)	Number of licensed Pasteurising Plants ...	—
(*e*)	Number of Heat Treated Plants not included in (*d*)	1

Slaughter Houses.

(*a*)	Number of licensed Slaughterhouses in district ...	6
(*b*)	Number of registered Slaughterhouses in district ...	1
(*c*)	Names of any in use under Ministry of Food ...	—

River Pollution. No cases of river pollution were dealt with during the year.

Sewage Disposal. There were no extensions of Sewers, new works or improvement during the year,

The Post War proposals will probably be considered by the Council in the very near future.